



THE BLACKBURN
DIOCESAN BOARD
OF EDUCATION

Vision for Education Chaplaincy

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations

Matthew 28 v19

1. Introduction

The young people in our schools and universities, do not only represent the future of the church in England, they are a vital component in the dynamic, creative, witnessing and worshipping church of today. Young people are passionate about the world they live in and they want to see a better future for themselves and future generations. They are increasingly distant from an understanding of the Christian faith and the transforming gospel message we proclaim. Many young people have never heard the gospel, never been into a church, have no concept of God and often consider Jesus to be a fictional character.

Our Vision is to see young people transforming the world through the love of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Mission is to help build worshipping, discipling and prayerful young people that love Jesus and want to follow Him and who live out their faith in communities, in friendships and in families.

This Vision should be read alongside the Board of Education's Vision for schools which sets out our desire for schools to work in nurturing and supporting children within a Christian climate and equipping children and young people with lifelong skills which will enable them to explore the Christian faith and develop spiritually. This vision also sits alongside our Vision for Children and Young people across the diocese which sets out our desire for churches to reimagine themselves to be truly multigenerational where children and young people develop as disciples and in mission on an equal footing with adults.

2. Education Chaplaincy within the Diocese

Into this context, our vision is to see Chaplaincy that connects people in our High Schools and Universities to Jesus in a way that exposes the reality of a relationship with Him that can transform our lives through the salvation found in the death and resurrection of Him. Whilst a high priority for Chaplaincy work in education institutions must be related to work with children and young people, the role of the Chaplain is to engage with all ages, witnessing to Christ in all they do and living out the great commission (Matt 28:19)

Whilst our High schools live out a Christian mission, the young people who attend are by no means all people of faith. In many cases they are aware of the church and have a concept of God but have not explored what this knowledge might mean for their lives. Others have had no encounter with faith until arriving at the school.

The three universities in the diocese are a significant step removed from this place and are fiercely secular institutions, with even the university within the Cathedral Group having a strong secular position. These institutions have young people within them who have never encountered a Christian and consider the faith to be a myth and the church something of which to be wary.

***As part of fulfilling our Vision and Mission to Children and Young People we want:
chaplains that enable the people of God in our High Schools and Universities to live out
the Christian life and witness to the presence of Jesus .***

These chaplains will minister to individual needs of both staff and students alike, sharing the Gospel in both word and deed. They are a single point of contact with the church for those who would never and have never engaged with the Christian faith. They are on the front line of engagement with a secular society, meeting with people who have no concept of church or the person of Jesus. They are part of global ministry and mission sharing Jesus with those from other cultures and countries whilst remaining sensitive to cultural differences. They are those that 'go' in the name of the Lord to share the good news.

A chaplain's role is to be a presence that permeates an institution and is accessible to all. They are often turned to in times of crisis and difficulty and must be able to pastorally judge any situation, sensitively being a Christian presence that is open and allows people to experience a living out of faith in practice. This ontological Christian life is at the heart of chaplaincy.

a) The University Position

Recent surveys of students in Lancaster University discovered that 51% of students stated some religious affiliation, with 30% identifying as Christian and 4-5% Muslim. In UCLAN similar data showed 35% Christian affiliation and 20% Muslim and in the University of Cumbria 55% of students claim some religious affiliation, with 41 percent Christian affiliation and 6 percent Muslim. This data is somewhat surprising and doesn't reflect the church attendance of students but does indicate that there seems to be a greater identity with Christianity than with church. This self-identification with Christianity presents a real opportunity to engage with young people on how this concept of Christian faith can be made real.

Universities are places where faith is formed and strengthened within young people who are keen to make their mark on society. It is in these years that many hear their calling to serve God through their work or in Christian ministry. Students in university are at an age where discipleship is crucial and where lives are shaped for the future. Students are keen to make their mark on the world and to challenge injustice. They are a force for change and as such universities are places where people are formed into the Christian leaders of the future.

**As part of fulfilling our Vision and Mission to Children and Young People we want:
students in our universities to be discipled, nurtured and challenged in their faith,
encouraged to share their faith and develop to lead others in discipleship, witness
and service.**

University staff are also often in need of pastoral support and Christian ministry. Chaplains have the role of witnessing to staff and for being a champion of justice within the institution.

Approach to Ministry in a University setting

1. Ministry is both being and doing and is open rather than fixed
2. The chaplain stands in the world as the 'church' seeking to be fully immersed in the secular institution, whilst witnessing to the transformative love of Christ.
3. The chaplain embodies the four marks of the church:
 - a. One-seeking to bring together different sections of the community, seeking reconciliation and universal fellowship throughout the institution as an expression of unity
 - b. Holy-representing holiness in worship, prayer and action
 - c. Catholic- championing inclusion of all groups in ways that do not set one against the other
 - d. Apostolic-enabling institutions to be "secular agents of grace"¹
4. Chaplains make the connections and facilitate where God is at work in the university.
5. Chaplains seek to welcoming the stranger and include those who are isolated
6. Chaplains meet people where they are, not where we'd like them to be.
7. Chaplains re-engaging people with faith in a post secular world by challenging secular 'myths' about Christianity and translating church language for the 'unchurched world'

b) The Further Education Position

There are many further education institutions throughout the diocese. None of these are church foundation institutions with a church presence being found only in our school based sixth forms. However, engagement in further education chaplaincy is important and is something that is negotiated and exercised at a local level between the institutions and parishes or deaneries in which they exist. These relationships are best built and managed locally, with the Board of Education seeking to support any parishes who would wish help in moving forward in this area.

c) The High School Position

At a time when churches increasingly find it hard to engage with young people, school chaplains are at the fore of sharing a living faith with this age group. Effective schools work leads to a greater awareness of young people exploring vocation and has in the past led to young people moving into employed ministry roles.

Our church high schools and academies are places where the Christian faith is explained and where there are opportunities to engage with prayer, sacrament and worship. These schools meet with children and adults within a climate where discussions on faith, worship and prayer are normal. However, whilst schools encourage the young to

¹ Caperon, Todd and Walters, editors *A Christian Theology of Chaplaincy* (Jessica Kingsley, 2017)

encounter God, the worship that is experienced by young people is often very different to that of many Church of England churches.

As part of fulfilling our Vision and Mission to Children and Young People we want:
to help young people transition from a school place of worship to engagement in a Church of England multigenerational worshipping community that is accessible to the young

Chaplaincy in schools has a long history and is a feature in many church secondary schools. There have been projects driven by the Board of Education to expand the work of Chaplains in schools and many schools continue with chaplaincy roles even though the funding support these roles centrally has ceased.

Chaplains in schools have a key role in enabling young people to encounter a practising Christian, to develop in their faith and to explore what faith sharing might look like. They allow pastoral support from a Christian perspective and a place for staff to gain support, prayer and a listening ear.

3. The Biblical place of chaplaincy

The Great Commission (Matthew 28v16-20)

Jesus came to them and said, I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth! Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to do everything I have told you. I will be with you always, even until the end of the world.

Go – The Great Commission challenges us to **go** and not wait to for them to come. Occasionally schools come to the church for help and support, but it is our commission to **go** and offer ourselves in service to our schools. Chaplaincy presents the Church with real opportunities to **go** and share Jesus, meeting people where they are and sharing the gospel of salvation.

Make them my disciples – The chaplain's role is to travel alongside individuals and invite them into a space where they may experience or encounter God. As this challenge is carried out it needs to be done in appropriate and relevant ways that respect both the educational authorities and governing bodies of the educational institution.

4. Role of the chaplain

a) At University

The role of the chaplain at university should include:

- Welfare and mentoring of staff and students

- Social justice work (i.e. fair trade, alcohol free events etc)
- Lead a worshipping community if the campus is remote or facilitate church groups on campus
- Welcome of all, inclusion of those on the margins of student life
- Facilitate student groups such as Christian Union and SCM
- Pastoral and spiritual support as required (i.e. support for families of suicide victims, staff support over bereavement, loss, illness etc)
- Committee membership
- Institutional input-pioneering

b) In a school

The chaplain in school should be a positive Christian presence, serving and enabling others to be open to the possibility of faith and:

- Live out the Gospel in word and actions and acting as a (Christian) role model
- Be the spiritual cement between students, staff and the church
- Present a positive view of Christianity in relevant, enthusiastic, creative and challenging ways
- Enhance worship
- Provide opportunities where the Christian faith can be discussed and encountered
- Being independent yet still part of the school
- Share the Christian faith with students and staff in appropriate and relevant ways
- Create space to reflect
- Enhance the behavioural support using things like Restorative Justice.
- Enhance the Christian ethos across the whole school
- Offer additional pastoral support in times of crisis
- Signpost to other appropriate agencies, including churches for those who are interested
- Provide mediation between individuals, the school or home where required
- Be there and available to listen, support and pray
- Communicate concerns appropriately with the wider Christian community for prayer and support
- Provide additional support during transition
- Empower individual Christians or Christian groups
- Help the school to meet some of their legal requirements (SIAMS and other inspections)
- Support Christian education across the curriculum

All areas the five marks of mission serve as a good reminder of the role of chaplaincy within a university or school. These are:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service

- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

5. Vision 2026 and Chaplaincy

The whole family within the Diocese of Blackburn is working together to implement *Vision 2026: Healthy Churches Transforming Communities*. The focus of this vision is to make churches healthy, because healthy churches grow. *Vision 2026* is about health, not growth, with a particular emphasis on:

- making disciples of Jesus Christ
- being witnesses to Jesus Christ
- growing leaders for Jesus Christ and
- work among children, young people and schools

Making disciples.

Chaplains have a key role in nurturing people in their discipleship journey. This can be on a 1:1 basis or as part of groups and organisations within schools and universities. Connecting disciples to worshipping communities forms a key part of a chaplain's work in order that individuals can find fellowship and support beyond the school or campus

Being witnesses

Chaplains are empowerers of the young. They equip support and encourage them to share their faith with peers as well as being themselves a beacon of Jesus' love for the school or university as a whole. Students are by their very nature passionate about enabling change and fighting for a cause. This zeal partnered with staring faith is a powerful witnessing tool.

Growing leaders

There is evidence that many Christian leaders are formed through their high school and university careers. Many university chaplains can point to ordained priests who engaged with the chaplaincy whilst studying. Equally, many lay leaders had experiences that formed them through school and university and find these to be at the heart of their calling to serve God in the places they find themselves

6. Summary Objectives

Our Vision is to see children and young people transforming the world through the love of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Mission is to help build worshipping, discipling and prayerful children and young people that love Jesus and want to follow Him and who live out their faith in communities, in friendships and in families.

To deliver this we want to help:

- 1. young people accept the salvation offered through Jesus' death on the cross and embark on a lifelong journey as a disciple**
- 2. students in our universities to be disciplined, nurtured and challenged in their faith, encouraged to share their faith, and develop to lead others in discipleship, witness and service.**
- 3. chaplains that enable the people of God in these institutions to live out the Christian life and witness to the presence of Jesus in these places.**
- 4. young people transition from a school place of worship to engagement in a Church of England multigenerational worshipping community that is accessible to the young**

7. Key actions of the Board of Education

- Build positive relationships with universities through engagement with senior staff teams and management groups
- Work with University/School staff senior teams to secure the place of Christian Chaplaincy in our universities and schools
- Appoint chaplains in universities for a long-term role of 5-8 years (3-year placement does not allow work to develop and flourish.)
- To integrate education chaplaincy into the life of the diocese and raise awareness of this work across other diocesan areas of work including links with chapters and deanery synods
- To provide training and support for chaplains in all education institutions
- To enable chaplains to create positive links with local churches allowing students to be disciplined in a church context
- Encourage local churches to pray for the work done in schools and universities
- Equip churches to actively engage in being places accessible to young people and young adults
- Enable and facilitate connections between chaplains and vocations teams within the diocese